

are making effort to reap the dividends of democracy.

We in Gombe State are a dynamic group who have been noted for hard work. The State is endowed with abundant agricultural land and adequate water resources for irrigated agriculture. These have provided us with a strong base for food and cash crop production. The main cash crop is cotton. Cotton production has been an age long occupation that was recognised and encouraged by the British Cotton Growing Association with a ginnery established since 1956. All the districts in Gombe State have established cotton markets for a very long time. Cotton production has increased tremendously in the state in recent time due to the positive approach adopted by the new democratic Government. For example, production has improved from 10,000 metric tons in 1999 to 50,000 tons in 2000. Government is planning to boost production to 100,000 tons in 2001.

Beside cotton, Gombe State is endowed with other agricultural raw materials and solid mineral resources. Huge quantities of crops that can adequately be used as raw materials by industry and also be consumed directly by house holds are grown annually in the state. Gombe State has the 2nd largest produce market in the North of Nigeria, second only to Kano, the commercial nerve centre of the North.

There have been various efforts to harness these agricultural produce but we are limited by capital application. Presently, apart from the two privately owned Cotton Gineries in Gombe and the Mango and Tomato processing factory at Kumo, there are no end user industries to utilise these huge quantities of raw materials grown in the State annually. A substantial portion is therefore being sold out and transported daily to other parts of the country for domestic/industrial uses. We therefore need investors to come and invest in this sector in the State.

In terms of Solid Minerals, Gombe State is endowed with over thirty-five (35) different varieties of Solid Minerals which are suspected to exist in large commercial quantities underground all over the State. However, some of these minerals have been explored and are currently being utilised by the few companies

From the foregoing it is clear, our economic potentials are quite enormous. The only inhibiting factor is lack of industrial base. This is why our Administration is committed to the industrial development of the State. Already the National privatisation exercise has opened the door for potential investors to try their hands in the abundant opportunities in the country. We in Gombe State are eager to receive such investors with generous incentives. For example, Government will provide free land for any genuine investor that is ready to establish a factory here. We shall equally grant such investor a five year tax holiday. These and other generous terms awaits any willing investors(s).

Having mentioned these potentials I foresee a good business future for any investor from the United States who is willing to invest here. We have a dynamic group of dedicated civil servants who are committed to the developmental needs of the young State. The Community is peace loving and industrious. The security situation is excellent. Power supply is very stable and communication is good. When all these are added to the abundant cheap raw materials available. Gombe State would pass the test of any entrepreneur. I therefore urge you to give us a trial I am sure you will be convinced.

Honourable Members of Congress, this is an exciting time for me and the People of Gombe state. A time that provides me the opportunity to present the investment potentials of this young State to the World's biggest economy. As I count on your assistance, I look forward to a dynamic future with huge investments from the United States of America. I therefore urge you to spare a few minutes and scan through this brochure so as to acquaint yourselves with some of our potentials.

Thank you and God Bless.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GERTRUDE STEIN DEMOCRATIC CLUB

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise, from time to time, to acknowledge the accomplishments and milestones of the citizens and organizations of the District of Columbia, whom I have the honor to represent in Congress. As a life-long advocate for civil rights, I am particularly proud to have within my constituency some of the oldest and most established Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered civil rights organizations in the United States.

These organizations work tirelessly, despite the triple scourges of racism, homophobia, and taxation without representation which belabor the District of Columbia, to extend, without regard to race, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation and gender those civil and political rights which are taken for granted by some Americans to all Americans, especially those Americans residing within the four quadrants of the District of Columbia.

Today I take particular pleasure in acknowledging the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club, one of America's oldest partisan Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered civil rights organizations on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary, this Thursday, June 7, 2001.

In 1976, my constituents, Paul Kuntzler, Richard Maulsby, and Dr. Franklin E. Kameny, founded the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club. Since its founding, the Stein Club has become a powerful and respected participant in the political life of the District of Columbia. The Gertrude Stein Club ceaselessly fights not only for human and civil rights, but for the inclusion and acceptance of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered persons within the political process of the District and the Nation.

The Club's success is reflected among its members who now hold, and have held, responsible government positions. These include: D.C. Councilmember Jim Graham; the Director of the D.C. Office of Boards and Commissions, Ronald Kin; Mayor Anthony Williams's Gay Community Liaison; Phiilp Pannell, and former White House Counsel Karen Tramontano.

The Gertrude Stein Democratic Club has always been at the forefront of efforts on behalf of human rights, domestic partnership, HIV services, hate crimes, employment non-discrimination,

As part of their 25th anniversary celebration, the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club will honor

two outstanding gay leaders: Andrew Tobias, Treasurer of the Democratic National Committee; and Paul Yandura, Executive Director of the National Stonewall Democratic Federation. Andrew Tobias enjoyed a national reputation for his work in the gay and lesbian community and for the Democratic Party. He is an author and financier who has helped the lives of millions of Americans with his sound financial advice. Mr. Tobias is a true renaissance man and "The Best Little Boy in the World." My constituent, Paul Yandura, despite his youth, is a seasoned veteran of national politics. Mr. Yandura served in the Clinton/Gore Administration, in both political and executive capacities responsible for constituency outreach, public/media relations, event production and he advised the President on a variety of policy issues which included E-Commerce, HIV/AIDS, fair housing and LGBT civil rights.

Mr. Speaker, this week that marks the 25th Anniversary of the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club, also marks the 20th Anniversary of the discernment of an illness which we now know as AIDS. On Friday, June 5, 1981 the Center for Disease Control published in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report an article on five gay angelino men in their late twenties and early thirties who contracted Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia. In the twenty years hence we, both as Americans and as Members of Congress, have been remiss in our duties. While we have passed much legislation, we have failed to enact The Employment Non-Discrimination Act and the Hate Crimes Prevention Act; we have not stopped the dizzying spiral of prescription drug costs, and the District of Columbia still has no voting representation in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House both to join me in congratulating the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club on its 25th Anniversary and to join me in re-doubling our efforts to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination and Hate Crimes Prevention Act, to provide affordable access to prescription drugs for all Americans who need them, and to bring some measure of democracy to the citizens of the District of Columbia during this Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TRICARE RETIREES OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2001

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the 57th anniversary of the D-Day Invasion of Normandy, to introduce federal legislation that will help military retirees access the health care benefits to which they are entitled. The TRICARE Retirees Opportunity Act will help retirees fully participate in the Department of Defense's (DOD) health care program, TRICARE. Since 1995, DOD has coordinated the medical care efforts of the military branches within TRICARE.

In an effort to fully meet America's promises to the military, last year Congress authorized expanding TRICARE to Medicare-eligible retirees and their dependents. Starting Oct. 1,

2001, all military retirees and their dependents who are age 65, or who are otherwise eligible for Medicare will be able to use TRICARE as a second payer.

In the past, military retirees who reached the age of 65 lost their TRICARE eligibility and were required to purchase supplemental policies, which are often prohibitively expensive, to cover Medicare's deductibles and coinsurance. By expanding TRICARE to the 65 years of age and older population, Congress can ensure that these men and women who served our nation are eligible for the best health care this nation can offer.

I recently became aware of an inequitable situation facing many military retirees. Under current law, seniors who failed to enroll in Medicare Part B when they first became eligible are subject to a premium penalty of 10 percent for every year they did not enroll, effectively increasing the monthly premium for a 70-year-old first-time enrollee from \$50 to \$75 for the rest of his or her life. Because military retirees could not have anticipated how their benefits would change, tens of thousands of retirees are now subject to these late penalties. The legislation I am introducing today would waive the penalty for military retirees who enroll between January 1, 2001 and December 31, 2002.

There is another barrier to full participation facing our military retirees. Current law permits late enrollees to sign up only during Medicare's annual open enrollment period—January 1 through March 31—with benefits beginning on July 1. My legislation will create a continuous open enrollment period through the end of 2002 for military retirees so that these prospective beneficiaries may access their new coverage immediately.

Mr. Speaker, this country has done a good job of meeting the health care needs of our active duty military. The Floyd A. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 was a milestone in our efforts to help the military retirees who devoted years of their lives to defend this nation. My bill takes one more important step to ensure that these retirees, their spouses, and their survivors have full access to the benefits we enacted for them last year. I urge all my colleagues to join me in support of this key legislation so that we may truly fulfill our promise to the nation's military retirees this year.

IN RECOGNITION OF AMTRAK'S
30TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Amtrak on its 30th Anniversary. On May 1, 1971, Amtrak began operations at a time when passenger rail service in America seemed to be fading into the past, destined to take its place in American history. But when Amtrak was created thirty years ago, there came an opportunity for passenger rail service to play a role in addressing America's transportation needs.

Today, with congestion dominating our highways and skies, and with airline delays and

gas prices reaching record levels, wary travelers have turned to rail service for relief. And Amtrak has succeeded in providing travelers with a quality alternative to every-day transportation headaches.

Amtrak has worked hard to understand the needs of passengers. It understands that people want to travel safely and comfortably, that people want to reach their destinations on time, and that people do not want to pay excessive fares. Because of this understanding, Amtrak is currently experiencing a tremendous growth in ridership: just last year, Amtrak logged a record 22.5 million trips, making Amtrak the ninth largest commercial passenger carrier in the United States.

To meet the demands of increased ridership, Amtrak has been working hard to make improvements to its infrastructure. In New Jersey, as well as throughout the Northeast, Amtrak's Northeast Corridor service provides an essential link between regional businesses and communities. To maintain its commitment to the region, Amtrak is working with the New Jersey Transit Authority (NJTRANSIT) to build and improve rail lines and tunnels. NJ TRANSIT and Amtrak are in the process of completing improvements to Newark Penn Station, and construction of the Newark International Airport Station, which will create a link between the airport and the Nation's busiest rail line. These improvements to local infrastructure will further empower local communities and the region's economy.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Amtrak's commitment to passenger rail service on its 30th Anniversary.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND
LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT
AREND DON LUBBERS

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man whose name is synonymous with higher education in Michigan and across the United States. After 32 years as president of Grand Valley State University, Arend Don Lubbers will retire later this month as the nation's longest-serving state university president. During his tenure, Grand Valley State University has grown from a small college with a few buildings on the main campus in Allendale to an established university with additional campuses in downtown Grand Rapids, Holland, Muskegon, Traverse City, and Petoskey.

When President Lubbers began his presidency at GVSU in January 1969, he was a trailblazer, holding the distinction of being one of the youngest college presidents in the country at the time. Recognized by Life magazine in 1962 for his hard work and his willingness to try new ideas, Lubbers lived up to the billing by building Grand Valley into a university that now boasts more than 42,000 alumni and is recognized as a premier institution in education, research, and technology.

Grand Valley has enjoyed considerable success because President Lubbers has implemented his vision of how to successfully lead

a university. During his farewell address to the campus community in April, he outlined four characteristics of what is required to make a university successful. The four characteristics—ownership, power, commitment, and sense of mission—have been his plan from the very beginning. GVSU is truly a special place today because he acted on the plans and ideas he envisioned for himself and the university community.

When classes resume for the 2001–2002 school year a new era will be underway at GVSU. It will mark the first time since the late 1960's that President Lubbers will be absent from welcoming faculty, staff, returning students, and new students to campus. Some thirty years later, the school year will begin without the man who has worked tirelessly to achieve his vision for higher education in West Michigan. Even though a new chapter will have begun, the legacy of President Lubbers will live on as Grant Valley State University continues to establish itself as a model for other institutions to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I want to personally thank President Lubbers for his ideas, his commitment to people and education, for laying the foundation for faculty, staff, and students to build on in the future and for his personal friendship. His personable and approachable style will be greatly missed by those who have had the pleasure of working alongside and with him over the years. He's truly earned the right to miss the first day of classes this coming school year. Congratulations and best wishes to President Lubbers and his wife Nancy as they begin their new venture!

TRIBUTE TO ELLEN KELLY
FAIRBANKS

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. McGOVERN, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated educator and administrator, Ellen Kelly Fairbanks, who has recently retired from her position as Principal of the Floral Street School in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts.

Mrs. Fairbanks is yet another example of all the hardworking and dedicated educators found in Central Massachusetts today. She inspires us with her love of teaching, which she has carried with her from the time she was a little girl in Iowa playing school with her younger brothers. Mrs. Fairbanks began her thirty years in education, teaching in Wakefield and Newton. Following time off to raise her two daughters Katherine and Martha, she returned to teaching in her new hometown of Shrewsbury as a reading specialist at Shrewsbury Middle School and later as a teacher at the Calvin Coolidge Elementary School.

In 1987, Mrs. Fairbanks became principal at the Beal School Early Childhood Center. Housed in an abandoned building designed as a high school in 1913, this school building experienced a rebirth under the leadership of Mrs. Fairbanks. To many the Beal Early Childhood Center became one of the most beloved institutions in town. In fact, her accomplishments at the Beal Early Childhood Center